

no reaction at all from the Indian ambassador.⁵⁰ However, he was aware of the important moral influence that Indian government could bring to bear in the Southeast Asian area, even though their reputation in both Laos and South Vietnam was not repeat not very high.

9. As to the general role of the Commission, I went on to say I hoped that Secretary Rusk might find it possible the following day in his press conference to put the references in the White Paper in the right perspective. As Harriman had himself said, the White Paper did not repeat not take account of the latest developments and seemed to me to leave an undesirable and unhelpful impression. I drew attention to the built-in difficulties in the Commission's composition which was essentially an early model troika. There had been wide misunderstanding of the terms of reference and function of the Commission and ignorance of its inherent limitations. For our part, we believed we had done our best in difficult circumstances and hoped that the State Department agreed. It was our clear understanding that the Commission was regarded and continued to be regarded by USA as having a useful role to play in the stabilization of the Southeast Asian area. I referred to earlier State Department confirmations to me in this sense.

10. Harriman fully agreed as to the continuing value of the Commission. He had the highest respect for the Canadian Commissioners and for the Government of Canada in this thankless task. He hoped that we could continue to take a vigorous line with the Indians in the hope that they too would be more vigorous so that the Commission would be able to do a more effective job. He agreed it might be helpful if Secretary Rusk were to take an opportunity to correct any false impressions about the Commission that might be derived from the White Paper. It might be wise not repeat not to volunteer anything; rather if he were asked a question at his news conference, Rusk might simply indicate that it was the State Department's understanding that action was now being taken in the Commission to investigate the GRVN complaints described in the White Paper.⁵¹

11. As to the timing of the White Paper's release, I said I was afraid that the members of the Commission in Saigon would take little comfort from its appearance at this juncture. I also drew attention to the possible repercussions on the current negotiations in Geneva on Laos. Harriman appeared to be sensitive to these points but simply said that the publication of the White Paper at this time was felt by USA to be necessary in view of the accelerating pace of guerrilla action in South Vietnam.

12. Finally, I took the opportunity to rehearse briefly for Harriman's benefit our earlier reaction to USA plans for increased assistance to South Vietnam. Namely that, consistent with our ICC role, we intended to be as helpful as possible in avoiding embarrassments for USA. I went on to point out, however, that if Canadian delegation found it necessary to employ delaying tactics on charges by the North Vietnamese, the prospects of prompt and effective action by the Commission on GRVN charges of subversion might well be reduced. I also drew attention to the difficulties that would arise if the Polish delegation were again subjected to the kind of South Vietnam pressure that had been applied in connection with Colonel Nam's death.

13. At the end of our conversation I had a brief exchange with Harriman on Laos which I shall report in a separate telegram.†

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⁵⁰ Voir/See *ibid.*, p. 725.

⁵¹ Pour une transcription de la conférence de presse donnée par Rusk, voir *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. XLV, No. 1174, pp. 1053-59.

For a transcript of Rusk's press conference, see *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. XLV, No. 1174, pp. 1053-59.